

What is claimed is:

1. A bi-directional broadband communication system suitable for exchanging audio-visual content information between remote locations, comprising:
  - a first interactive audio-visual appliance at a first location;
  - one or more collection elements operably coupled to the first interactive audio-visual appliance and suitable for collecting one or more physiological data; and
  - a second interactive audio-visual appliance at a second location;wherein during a remote communication mode of operation of the first interactive audio-visual appliance a user can select to transmit via a bi-directional broadband transmission media to the second interactive audio-visual appliance the one or more physiological data collected by the one or more collection elements.
2. The system of claim 1, wherein the first interactive audio-visual appliance is a set-top box.
3. The system of claim 1, wherein the bi-directional transmission media coupling the first and second interactive audio-visual appliances comprises the Internet.
4. The system of claim 1, wherein in response to receiving the one or more physiological data transmitted by the first interactive audio-visual appliance during the second mode of operation, a second user of the second interactive audio-visual appliance can select to transmit audio-visual information to the first interactive audio-visual appliance via the bi-directional transmission media.

5. The system of claim 1, wherein the remote communication mode of operation is entered in response to the user of the first interactive audio-visual appliance selectively activating a mode selection element of the first interactive audio-visual appliance.

6. The system of claim 1, wherein said system further comprises:

one or more databases, coupled to the second interactive audio-visual appliance, to which the one or more physiological data transmitted to the second interactive is stored.

7. The system of claim 1, wherein the one or more physiological data is merged with an electronic medical record in the one or more databases.

8. A bi-directional broadband communication system suitable for exchanging audio-visual content information between remote locations, comprising:

a first interactive audio-visual appliance at a first location having a first mode of operation, a second mode of operation, and a mode selection element for allowing a user of the interactive audio-visual appliance to selectively enter the first and second modes of operation;

one or more collection elements operably coupled to the first interactive audio-visual appliance and suitable for collecting one or more physiological data;

a content server coupled to the interactive audio-visual appliance and having access to a content database; and

a second interactive audio-visual appliance at a second location;

wherein during the first mode of operation a user of the interactive audio-visual appliance can receive audio-visual content information selected by the user and received from the content database of the content server;

wherein during the second mode of operation the user of the interactive audio-visual appliance can select to transmit via a bi-directional broadband transmission media to the second interactive audio-visual appliance the one or more physiological data collected by the one or more collection elements.

9. The system of claim 8, wherein the first interactive audio-visual appliance is a set-top box.

10. The system of claim 8, wherein the bi-directional transmission media coupling the first and second interactive audio-visual appliances comprises the Internet.

11. The system of claim 8, wherein in response to receiving the one or more physiological data transmitted by the first interactive audio-visual appliance during the second mode of operation, a second user of the second interactive audio-visual appliance can select to transmit audio-visual information to the first interactive audio-visual appliance via the bi-directional transmission media.

12. The system of claim 8, wherein said system further comprises:  
one or more databases, coupled to the second interactive audio-visual appliance, to which the one or more physiological data transmitted to the second interactive is stored.

13. The system of claim 12, wherein the one or more physiological data is merged with an electronic medical record in the one or more databases.

14. An interactive audio-visual appliance, comprising:

a control element;

an interface element controlled by the control element by which a user of the interactive audio-visual appliance selectively controls operation of the interactive audio-visual appliance during a first mode of operation and a second mode of operation of the interactive audio-visual appliance;

a mode selection element controlled by the control element for allowing a user of the interactive audio-visual appliance to selectively enter the first and second modes of operation;

a plurality of ports controlled by the control element and suitable for accepting one or more physiological data collected by a plurality of corresponding probes coupled to the plurality of ports;

wherein during the second mode of operation the user of the interactive audio-visual appliance can select to transmit via a bi-directional broadband transmission media to a second interactive audio-visual appliance the one or more physiological data presented to the plurality of ports;

15. The appliance of claim 14, wherein the interface element is a control panel operable to receive selection inputs to the interactive audio-visual appliance.

16. The appliance of claim 14, wherein the interactive audio-visual appliance is a set-top box.

17. The appliance of claim 14, wherein the bi-directional broadband transmission media comprises the Internet.

18. The appliance of claim 14, wherein during the first mode of operation the user of the interactive audio-visual appliance can receive audiovisual content information selected by the user and received from a content server.

19. The appliance of claim 14, wherein in response to receiving the one or more physiological data transmitted by the interactive audio-visual appliance during the second mode of operation, a second user of a second interactive audio-visual appliance can select to transmit audio-visual information to the interactive audio-visual appliance via the bi-directional transmission media.

20. A method for transmitting physiological content between remote locations, comprising:

collecting one or more physiological data;

providing the one or more physiological data to a first interactive audio-visual appliance at a first location during a remote communication mode of the first interactive audio-visual appliance;

transmitting the one or more physiological data from the first interactive audio-visual appliance to a second interactive audio-visual appliance at a second location during the remote communication mode of the first interactive audio-visual appliance via a bi-directional broadband transmission medium.

21. The method of claim 20, further comprising:

during a normal mode of operation of the first interactive audio-visual appliance, the first interactive audio-visual appliance receiving audiovisual content information selected by a user of the first interactive audio-visual appliance from a content server.

22. The method of claim 20, wherein in response to receiving the one or more physiological data transmitted by the first interactive audio-visual appliance during the second mode of operation, a second user of the second interactive audio-visual appliance transmitting audio-visual information to the first interactive audio-visual appliance via the bi-directional broadband transmission media.

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